



NORTHEAST ENERGY EFFICIENCY COUNCIL

A business association of the energy efficiency industry
Connecticut Chapter

Raised Bill 5025 An Act Concerning a Green Technology, Life Science and Health Information Technology Jobs Loan Forgiveness Program

**Higher Education and Employee Advancement Committee
Public Hearing
February 18, 2010**

Good Afternoon, Senator Handley, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employee Advancement Committee. My name is Dave Leishman; I am the President of Applied Proactive Technology and the President of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council- Connecticut Chapter (NEEC-CT). NEEC-CT is a subchapter of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council, which is a regional coalition of businesses and people involved in the energy efficiency marketplace. We represent over 45 business and 1000 employees.

I am here today to express concerns with Raised Bill 5025 An Act Concerning a Green Technology, Life Science and Health Information Technology Jobs Loan Forgiveness Program. While NEEC is supportive of efforts to increase education and job training opportunities in the Green Collar field we oppose the use of rate payer funds for any loan forgiveness program.

The diversion of \$3 million from the rate payer funded Energy Efficiency programs threatens the very companies that will be in a position to hire any newly trained people. The energy efficiency programs allow residential and commercial customers with a cost-effective means of improving their energy efficiency and reducing their electric usage, thus lowering their bills. These funds are typically fully subscribed. The reduction of \$3 million from these funds will mean fewer residents and businesses will have the opportunity to take advantage of the programs they pay into. With reduced funding the Connecticut companies that provide the energy efficiency retrofits will see a reduction in business that may in turn cause the loss of current jobs and affect their ability to hire new employees.

The diversion of funds for a loan forgiveness program is short sighted by reducing or eliminating the business opportunities and jobs for which this bill aims to train people for. As stated earlier, NEEC is supportive of expanded Green Job training opportunities as a more professional and better educated work force allows Connecticut companies to remain competitive and better meet the needs of our customers. We are concerned that the reduction of funding in these difficult economic times may hurt our ability to sustain current jobs let alone create the opportunity for new jobs.

With these concerns we ask that you oppose Raised Bill 5025 and any diversion of the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Funds. Thank you for time and consideration.